

The Saturday Review Financial Supplement

Conducted by Hartley Withers

No. 3463. Vol. 133.

11 March 1922

[REGISTERED AS A
NEWSPAPER.]

6d

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The Outlook

Buoyancy in gilt-edged securities, carrying them up to prices at which their yield begins to look rather attenuated, is consequently spreading to all stocks with interest or dividend that is fixed, or is believed to be fixed, and is even overflowing to Home Rails, on the belief in the minds of many investors that their pre-war net revenue is really secured. It was, of course, the basis at which the recent Act aimed, but only the lessons of experience can show whether the trade of the country can stand rates arranged with this object. The continued rise in securities with a fixed yield is based on hopes of cheaper money and on trade depression. These two causes go hand in hand, since trade recovery would almost certainly mean some rally in commodity prices and a consequently extended demand for credit. The monthly figures published by the clearing banks show a considerable rise in their investments, accompanied by a decrease in discounts. Trade revival would tend to reverse this process, but there seems to be little expectation of it on any extended scale in the unsatisfactory state of political feeling in so many parts of the world, with the reparations question left unsettled, and with the possibility of fresh industrial deadlock at home.

THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS

Income-tax again came in well and the £26½ millions thus derived was largely responsible for the surplus of nearly £7½ millions obtained in the week, in spite of the disbursement of £17 millions on Debt interest. There seems to be a good deal of justification for the contention of the Chancellor that the reserves of wealth in the hands of people were greater than anyone suspected. During the week £16 millions were borrowed on Ways and Means advances and nearly £2 millions net was obtained from the sale of Savings Certificates, enabling Treasury Bills to be reduced by £24 millions and nearly £1½ millions of "other"—that is, foreign—debt to be repaid. The intimation that on and after March 17th, tenders will be invited for Treasury Bonds in the same manner as for Treasury Bills has not been received with much enthusiasm. It is clear that such a course would enable the Government to obtain the fullest advantage of cheap money, but it is alleged that only close followers of the Money Market can be expected to tender, and a large part of the public reached by the "tap" system will be excluded. On the other hand, though there are plenty of reasons for wanting to see the floating debt reduced, there are limits to the extent to which it is well to redeem it by the issue of longer-dated obligations with a much higher rate of interest than that at which Treasury bills can be sold.

MONEY AND EXCHANGE

Lombard Street's experience has once more shown that when the Government is able to wipe out its debt to the Bank of England on Ways and Means advances, the market has to borrow. Discounts have been firmer owing to the scarcity of short money, but the usual hopes are entertained of cheaper money after the turn of the quarter. A relapse has been marked by the price of sterling in New York, and it was not desirable that its recovery should be too rapid. An official check seems to have been administered to America's late enthusiasm for foreign loans. It was announced in last Saturday's *Times* that the State department "expects bankers to inform it fully about loans to foreign Governments and municipalities before negotiation of such loans is completed... American manufacturers as a whole, and the Washington Administration also, have never supported the theory that foreign borrowers ought to be allowed to spend proceeds of borrowings wherever they could buy goods cheaper."

STOCK MARKETS

Prices on the Stock Exchange continued to astonish even their most determined backers, by soaring towards the roof in spite of—or because of—the many adverse features in the political and industrial outlook. New issues are still snapped up in a moment, and some more French railway bonds are expected next week, following the rampant success of the P.L.M. flotation. Even the quite speculative markets have shown remarkable strength, on hopes of an overflow into them of money now pouring into first charges. As the week wore on, however, there was a general reaction.

INDUSTRIAL PROSPECTS

Cautious hopefulness still seems to be the key in which forecasts of trade prospects are pitched, by those who ought to be best able to judge of them. At last Tuesday's meeting of Borax Consolidated, the chairman pointed out that this company's prosperity is largely dependent on industrial users of boric acid and borax and affiliated products, and if trade generally is bad, it suffers. "The immediate outlook," he continued, "while it offers some encouragement and appears more hopeful, does not show indications of a quick revival of business. On the Continent of Europe, where we had a large trade extending to all the countries, the markets, where they have not wholly disappeared, have become disorganized owing to political conditions, and difficult to trade with owing to the expansions of currency causing enormous fluctuations in exchange rates." It is the old story. Bad politics and bad money still make real trade revival impossible, and it is hindered by high costs of production and distribution. Sir Woodman Burbidge, talking to Harrod's shareholders on Wednesday, made some pertinent observations on this point. After showing that a company such as theirs cannot prosper while the export trade of the country remains at less than half the pre-war level, he went on to say that "before we can hope to see any great improvement in the trade of the country, it is essential there should be a reduced income-tax, reduced railway rates and reduced postal rates." He also put in a strong plea for the abolition of the corporation profits tax, so unfair to ordinary shareholders in joint stock companies.

FIGURES AND PRICES

PAPER MONEY (in millions).

	Latest Note Issue.	Stock of Gold.	Ratio of Gold to Notes.	Previous Note Issue.	Note Issue Feb. 28, 1921.
European Countries			%		
Austria Kr.	227,016	?	—	203,164	38,353
Belgium Fr.	6,259	267	4	6,296	6,039
Britain (B. of E.) £	103			107	106
Britain (State) £	301	157	38	325	336
Bulgaria Leva	3,354	37	1+	3,592	3,248
Czecho-Slov. Kr.	10,757	1,174+	11+	11,038	10,915
Denmark Kr.	407	228	50	450	509
Estonia Mk.	350	343+	98+	250	—
Finland Mk.	1,372	43	3	1,357	1,464
France Fr.	36,258	5,525	15	36,151	38,146
Germany Mk.	115,797	996	—	115,755	67,427
Greece Dr.	2,161	57	2	2,130	1,559
Holland Fl.	989	613+	65+	982	1,031
Hungary Kr.	26,042	?	—	25,925	15,571
Italy (Bk.) Lire	14,425	1,500+	11+	13,273	15,279
Jugo-Slavia Dnrs	4,641	74	1	4,571	3,406
Norway Kr.	369	147	39	375	425
Poland Mk.	240,000	25	—	229,500	62,560
Portugal Esc.	734	9	1	722	626
Roumania Lei	13,709	4,582	33	13,723	10,222
Spain Pes.	4,172	2,518	51	4,207	4,243
Sweden Kr.	538	274	48	541	687
Switzerland Fr.	807	547	66	825	944
Other Countries					
Australia £	56	23	41	58	59
Canada (Bk.) \$	184			194	207
Canada (State) \$	269	165	36	269	278
Egypt £E	35	3	8	36	34
India Rs.	1,735	24	13	1,729	1,646
Japan Yen	1,246	1,246+	111+	1,118	1,118
New Zealand £	8	8+	100+	8	8
U.S. Fed. Res. \$	2,183	2,947	135	2,176	3,073

+Total cash.

GOVERNMENT DEBT (in thousands)

	Mar. 4, '22.	Feb. 25, '22.	Mar. 5, '21.
Total deadweight	7,653,807	7,666,192	7,517,142
Owed abroad	1,084,152	1,085,806	1,131,122
Treasury Bills	933,151	957,266	1,089,209
Bank of England Advances	—	—	16,250
Departmental do.	127,556	111,600	183,876

NOTE.—The highest point of the deadweight debt was reached at Dec. 31, 1919, when it touched 8,033 millions. On March 31, 1921 it was 7,574 millions. Of the increase shown since then 102 millions represent a nominal addition, due to a conversion scheme.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS (in thousands)

	Mar. 4, '22.	Feb. 25, '22.	Mar. 5, '21.
Total Revenue from Ap. 1	963,610	925,586	1,248,762
Expenditure	949,013	918,721	1,038,360
Surplus or Deficit	+14,597	+6,865	+210,402
Customs and Excise	301,397	298,002	308,043
Income and Super Tax	321,022	294,609	320,048
Stamps	14,377	14,377	23,617
Excess Profits Duties	29,714	29,714	200,608
Post Office	51,000	49,500	44,950
Miscellaneous—Special	137,491	132,897	252,267

BANK OF ENGLAND RETURNS (in thousands)

	Mar. 8, '22.	Mar. 1, '22.	Mar. 9, '21.
Public Deposits	15,189	17,151	17,881
Other	123,097	118,492	115,196
Total	138,286	135,643	133,077
Government Securities	50,549	47,986	39,154
Other	80,919	81,730	93,718
Total	131,468	129,716	132,872
Circulation	122,324	123,093	128,474
Do. less notes in cur- rency reserve	102,784	103,643	109,024
Coin and Bullion	128,764	128,762	128,324
Reserve	24,979	24,119	18,299
Proportion	18%	17.7%	13.1%

CURRENCY NOTES (in thousands)

	Mar. 8, '22.	Mar. 1, '22.	Mar. 9, '21.
Total outstanding	301,413	299,811	337,883
Called in but not canceld.	1,669	1,674	2,274
Gold backing	28,500	28,500	28,500
B. of E. note, backing	19,450	19,450	19,450
Total fiduciary issue	251,794	250,187	287,659

NOTE.—The maximum fiduciary issue for 1921 was officially "fixed" at £317,555,200.

BANKERS CLEARING RETURNS (in thousands)

	Mar. 8, '22.	Mar. 1, '22.	Mar. 9, '21.
Town	678,854	737,761	562,643
Metropolitan	33,786	29,056	37,142
Country	63,959	50,383	77,125
Total	776,599	817,200	676,910
Year to date	7,795,677	7,019,073	7,324,963

LONDON CLEARING BANK FIGURES (in thousands)

	Feb., '22.	Jan., '22.	Apr., '21.
Coin, notes, balances with Bank of England, etc.	210,351	212,722	204,983
Deposits	1,847,789	1,872,230	1,751,719
Acceptances	63,352	64,085	63,585
Discounts	403,622	442,752	278,302
Investments	378,151	349,830	322,784
Advances	765,677	770,144	869,901

MONEY RATES

	Mar. 9, '22.	Mar. 2, '22.	Mar. 9, '21.
Bank Rate	4½	4½	7
Do. Federal Reserve N.Y.	4½	4½	7
3 Months' Bank Bills ...	3½-½	3½-½	6½
6 Months' Bank Bills ...	3½-½	3½-½	6-6½
Weekly Loans	3	3	5½

FOREIGN EXCHANGES (telegraphic transfers)

	Mar. 9, '22.	Mar. 2, '22.	Mar. 9, '21.
New York, \$ to £	4.36½	4.42½	3.88½
Do., 1 month forward ...	4.36½	4.42½	—
Montreal, \$ to £	4.54	4.51½	4.43
Mexico, d. to \$	26½d.	26½d.	32d.
B. Aires, d. to \$	46½d.	45½d.	50½d.
Rio de Jan., d. to milrs.	7½d.	7½d.	9½d.
Valparaiso, \$ to £	38.40	38.70	—
Montevideo, d. to \$	44½d.	44½d.	47½d.
Lima, per Peru £	22% prem.	20% prem.	—
Paris, frcs. to £	48.60	48.30	54.85
Do., 1 month forward ...	48.60	48.30	—
Berlin, marks to £	1,095	1,050	247
Brussels, frcs. to £	51.90	51.15	52.65
Amsterdam, fl. to £	11.52½	11.57½	11.36½
Switzerland, frcs. to £	22.50	22.64	23.15
Stockholm, kr. to £	16.73	16.70	17.40
Christiania, kr. to £	23.86	25.13	24.05
Copenhagen, kr. to £	20.75	20.86	23.05
Helsingfors, mks. to £	210	217	139½
Italy, lire to £	86	82½	106½
Madrid, pesetas to £	27.78	27.70	28.05
Greece, drachma to £	96½	97½	62
Lisbon, escudo d.	4½d.	4½d.	5½d.
Vienna, kr. to £	28,500	23,500	1,900
Prague, kr. to £	268	260	302½
Budapest, kr. to £	3,200	3,050	—
Bucharest, lei to £	590	550	284
Belgrade, dinars to £	310	no quotation	—
Sofia, leva to £	640	650	—
Warsaw, marks to £	19,000	17,500	3,400
Constantinople, piastres to £	660	650	—
Alexandria, piastres to £	97½	97½	97½
Bombay, d. to rupee	15½d.	15½d.	15½d.
Calcutta, d. to rupee	28½d.	28½d.	27½d.
Hongkong, d. to rupee	37½d.	37½d.	35½d.
Shanghai, d. to tael	27½d.	27½d.	27½d.
Singapore, d. to \$	28d.	25½d.	29½d.
Yokohama, d. to yen ...	—	—	—

UNEMPLOYMENT

	Feb. 21, 1922.	Feb. 14, 1922.	Feb. 7, 1922.	June 24, 1921.
Men	1,425,028	1,443,000	1,446,974	1,549,307
Women	326,653	334,500	332,204	477,627
Juveniles	110,134	112,900	112,951	150,965
Total	1,861,815	1,890,400	1,892,129	2,177,899
On relief work	128,500	127,140	124,061	—

COAL OUTPUT

	Feb. 25, 1922.	Feb. 18, 1922.	Feb. 11, 1922.	Feb. 26, 1921.
Week ending:				
tons.	5,046,600	5,000,800	4,902,500	4,321,400
tons.	37,445,300	32,398,700	27,397,900	35,909,600

IRON AND STEEL OUTPUT

	1922. Jan.	1921. Dec.	1921. Nov.	1920. Dec.
tons.	288,000	275,000	271,800	682,500
Fig Iron	288,000	2,611,000	2,336,400	8,007,900
Steel	327,500	381,000	442,800	746,000
Yr. to date	327,500	3,624,800	3,243,900	9,056,900

PRICES OF COMMODITIES METALS, MINERALS, ETC.

	Mar. 9, '22.	Mar. 2, '22.	Mar. 9, '21.
Gold, per fine oz.	95s. 0d.	93s. 6d.	105s. 11d.
Silver, per oz.	33½d.	32½d.	31½d.
Iron, Sc'h pig No. 1 ton	£4.18.0	£4.18.0	£9.0.0
Steel rails, heavy "	£9.5.0	£9.5.0	£18.0.0
Copper, Standard "	£60.10.0	£59.0.0	£65.12.6
Tin, Straits "	£142.0.0	£142.0.0	£148.5.0
Lead, soft foreign "	£20.15.0	£20.10.0	£18.5.0
Spelter "	£25.15.0	£24.15.0	£26.15.0
Coal, best Admiralty "	27s. 6d.	26s. 3d.	57s. 0d.

CHEMICALS AND OILS

Nitrate of Soda, per ton	£16.0.0	£16.0.0	£22.10.0
Indigo, Bengal per lb.	10s. 6d.	11s. 0d.	11s. 0d.
Linseed Oil, spot per ton	£38.5.0	£39.5.0	£29.5.0
Linseed, La Plata ton	£20.10.0	£20.10.0	£15.15.0
Palm Oil, Benin spot ton	£31.10.0	£31.10.0	£35.10.0
Petroleum, w. white gal.	1s. 5d.	1s. 5d.	2s. 4½d.
Turpentine cwt.	65s. 3d.	63s. 6d.	55s. 0d.

FOOD

Flour Country. straights ex mill 280 lb.	45s. 0d.	44s. 6d.	68s. 0d.
Wheat, English Gaz. Avg. per 480 lbs.	51s. 9d.	49s. 11d.	72s. 5d.
Wheat, No. 2 Red Winter N.Y. per bush.	149 cents.	150½ cents.	191 cents.

TEXTILES, ETC.

Cotton, fully middling, American per lb.	10.81d.	10.37d.	7.78d.
Cotton, Egyptian, FGF. Sakel per lb.	17.75d.	17.00d.	15.00d.
Hemp, N.Z. spot, per ton	£36.10.0	£35.0.0	£44.10.0
Jute, first marks "	£24.15.0	£24.0.0	£31.0.0
Wool, N.S.W. av. combing 64's per lb.	49d.	49d.	48d.
Rubber, Std. Crepe, lb.	8d.	7½d.	1s. 0½d.
Leather, sole bends, 14-16lb per lb.	2s. 5d.	2s. 5d.	2s. 8d.

OVERSEAS TRADE (in thousands)

	Jan., 1922.	Jan., 1921.	%	1921.	1920.
Imports	76,488	117,041	-34	1,086,687	1,932,649
Exports	63,147	92,756	-31	703,196	1,334,469
Re-exports	8,459	9,955	-15	107,052	222,753
Balance of Imports	4,882	14,330	-65	276,439	375,427
Export cotton goods	16,813	23,973	-29	178,710	401,420
Expt. woollen goods	5,010	7,902	-36	55,104	134,859
Export coal value....	4,783	5,556	-13	42,952	99,627
Do. quantity tons....	4,021	1,700	+136	24,661	24,932
Export iron, steel....	5,860	10,692	-45	63,772	128,907
Export machinery....	5,800	8,060	-27	74,630	63,432
Tonnage entered	2,906	2,925	—	37,112	36,492
" cleared	3,919	2,616	+49	36,395	36,725

INDEX NUMBERS

United Kingdom—	Feb., 1922.	Jan., 1922.	Dec., 1921.	Dec., 1920.	July 1914
Wholesale (Economist).	1922.	1922.	1921.	1920.	1914
Cereals and Meat	948	907½	921½	1,344	579
Other Food Products ...	640½	654½	636	805	352
Textiles	1,037½	1,066½	1,106	1,284	616½
Minerals	696½	730	762	1,216	464½
Miscellaneous	936½	925½	931½	1,275	553
Total	4,259	4,284	4,357	5,924	2,565

Retail—(Ministry of Labour)—	Jan., 1922.	Dec., 1921.	Nov., 1921.	Jan., 1921.	July 1914.
Food only	179	185	195	263	100
All items	188	192	199	251	100

France—Retail	Jan., 1922.	Dec., 1921.	Nov., 1921.	Dec., 1920.	July, 1914.
(Paris)	1922.	1921.	1921.	1920.	1914.
Food, Fuel, Lighting	319	323	326	470	100

Germany—Wholesale (Frankfurter Zeitung)	Feb. 1, 1922.	Jan. 1, 1922.	Dec. 1, 1921.	Feb. 1, 1921.	average 1913.
All Commodities	352	317	298	136	9.23

United States—Wholesale (Bradstreet's)	Feb. 1, 1922.	Jan. 1, 1922.	Feb. 1, 1921.	Aug. 1, 1914.
All commodities.	11.4190	11.3725	12.3689	8.7087

FREIGHTS

From Cardiff to	March 9, 1922.	March 2, 1922.	March 2, 1921.
West Italy (coal)	14/6	14/0	17/6
Marseilles "	13/0	13/0	17/0
Port Said "	16/0	16/0	17/6
Bombay "	21/0	22/0	25/0
Islands "	11/6	10/6	13/6
B. Aires "	14/6	14/6	29/0
From			
Australia (wheat)	51/3	52/6	60/0
B. Aires (grain)	25/0	31/3	32/6
San Lorenzo "	26/3	33/9	35/0
N. America (grain)	4/0	4/0	5/0
Bombay (general)	26/0	24/0	22/6
Alexandria (cotton-seed)	12/0	12/0	12/6

HOME RAILWAY TRAFFICS

	Last week.	Previous week.	Total To Date.
Caledonian	165,400	161,100	1,164,800
Glasgow & S.W.	63,000	61,700	464,100
Great Central	214,800	211,900	1,798,000
Great Eastern	203,500	199,600	1,746,700
Great Northern	246,800	230,700	2,020,500
Great Western	540,000	533,000	4,592,000
Highland	21,664	22,696	176,410
Hull & Barnsley	32,740	35,650	261,003
L. & N.W.	755,000	767,000	6,573,000
L. & S.W.	177,900	161,200	1,434,400
L. B. & S. C.	107,305	—	927,054
Metropolitan	36,566	36,200	330,979
Midland G.W.	26,996	32,180	229,578
Midland	511,000	513,000	3,837,000
North British	190,100	177,300	1,335,500
North Eastern	354,600	335,100	2,472,300
North London	14,860	14,770	135,888
S. E. & C.	157,100	—	1,314,900
Underground	230,155	214,685	1,879,724
Do. Traction group	49,245	47,421	406,943

SECURITY PRICES

BRIT. AND FOREIGN GOVT.

	Mar. 9, '22.	Mar. 2, '22.	Mar. 9, '21.
Consols	56	55½	46½d
War Loan 3½% ...	92½	91½	84½
Do. 4½% ...	94	94	78½
Do. 5% ...	97½	96½	85½
Do. 4% ...	101½	100½	96
Funding 4% ...	84½	82½	69½
Victory 4% ...	85½	84½	76½
Local Loans 3% ...	63½	62½d	51½
Conversion 3½% ...	72½	72	—
Bank of England ...	215	205	176½
India 3½% ...	60½	61½	55
Argentina (86) 5% ...	97½	97	90
Belgian 3% ...	66½	65½	55½
Brazil 1914 5% ...	72½	72	54½
Chilian 1886 4½% ...	78	76	60½
Chinese 5% '96	90½	90½	80
French 4% ...	37½	36½	33½
German 3% ...	2½	2½	6
Italian 3½% ...	23½	26	20
Japanese 4½% (1st)	102	101	106
Russian 5% ...	16	15	10½

RAILWAYS.

Great Central Pref.	14½	11½	8½
Great Eastern	37	32½	27½
Great Northern Pref. ...	58	56½	40
Great Western	91½	89	65
London Brighton Def.	52½	48½	37½
London Chatham	9½	9	5½
L. & N.W.	88½	84½	72½
L. & S.W. Def.	26½	25½	20½
Metropolitan	37½	34½	21
Do. District	28	26	13½
Midland Def.	57½	56½	43½
North Brit. Def.	14	12½	10½
North Eastern	92	89	68
South Eastern Def.	32½	30½	20
Underground "A"	5/9	6/0	5/0
Antofagasta	52	52	54½
B.A. Gt. Southern	66½	65	59½
Do. Pacific	42½	42	40½
Canadian Pacific	154½	153½	145½d
Central Argentine	56½	55	53½
Entre Rios	18½	19	19
Grand Trunk	1½	1½	4½
Do. 3rd. Pref.	4½	4	12½
Leopoldina	25	24½	23½
San Paulo	117	117	124
United of Havana	54½	56	66

INDUSTRIALS, ETC.

Anglo-Persian 2nd Pref....	24/9	23/9	—
Armstrongs	13/0	13/9	15/3
Brit.-Amer. Tobacco	67/9	65/6	65/0
Burmah Oil	5½	5½	6½
Coats	55/6	55/6	44/0
Courtaulds	37/9	37/1½	28/6
Cunard	18/6	18/6	17/0
Dorman Long	15/9	16/0	16/0
Dunlop	6/6	6/7½	9/3
Fine Spinners	35/0	35/0	33/9
Hudsons Bay	6½	6½	5½
Imp. Tobacco	54/3	53/0	46/9
Listers	19/9	19/6	15/0
Marconi	1½	1½	1½
Mexican Eagle	4 1/32	4½	5½
P. & O. Def.	307	310	300
Royal Mail	86	87	92½
Shell	4½	4½	5½
Vickers	8/3	8/7½	11/6

Foreign News

France. The monetary policy of the British Treasury, particularly as regards its favourable reaction on the value of our Government stocks, has many admirers in France, and the Poincaré cabinet is evolving at the present moment a similar plan of operations, a step which many Paris critics regard as much overdue. The chief opponents of the course of action followed, so far, by the Ministry of Finance, are the Paris Bourse circles, where the belief is firmly held that the stagnation ruling there for many months already, and more particularly the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in the Government loan market are due, to a great extent, to the tempting rates of discount offered to the purchasers of Treasury and National Defence bills. Yearlings are obtainable so far on terms to yield slightly over 5 per cent., and many investors are satisfied with this revenue in view of the safety from depreciation, a danger which, as their experience has taught them during recent years, is difficult to avoid until general conditions become more satisfactory. There are now about 65,000 million francs National Defence certificates in circulation (of a total floating debt of about 93,500 million francs) and it is evident that huge funds are thus being withheld from the ordinary investment markets. The absence of normal demand is felt particularly on the war loan market, where a large floating supply is unable to find a permanent home, and where artificially controlled prices are maintained, greatly to the disadvantage of holders urgently requiring hard cash, who, unable to wait until the official broker has discovered a suitable buyer, have to accept the best terms obtainable on the illegal, but tolerated "coulisse" market, which means a loss of several points as compared with the more or less nominal quotations issued officially. Needless to say, no careful investor is likely to consider the purchase of securities whose prices have apparently not yet found their natural level and which cannot be marketed freely. Lower money rates, no doubt, would improve to some extent these conditions, as a wider margin than that prevailing at present between long and short loan terms should render far more attractive all securities, having a more permanent character, and the public is likely to favour the latter to a greater extent when the turn of the trade begins to become still more manifest on the money market. Though the congestion prevailing on the French Government loan market cannot be relieved without a funding loan, for which the time however is hardly ripe yet, much might be achieved by other means. An important decision in that direction has been taken recently by the Government. The Treasury bill and National Defence certificate rates are to be reduced as from the 12th inst. by $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for yearlings, whilst the holders of thirty-day bills will have to be satisfied with 3 per cent. only, the intermediate currencies having their rates cut down to the same extent. This step is bound to have a considerable influence on the market rates, and the official rate of discount also is not likely to be maintained much longer on its present level of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in force since July, 1921.

Sweden. During the past month the international value of the Swedish krona has undergone a considerable improvement, as demonstrated by the fall in the New York cheque quotation on the Stockholm market. In January last the \$ rate stood at 3.90 kroner, but since then a fall occurred to 3.77, which compares with a gold parity of 3.73 $\frac{1}{2}$. The resumption of gold payments by the Swedish State bank, which prominent financial authorities of the country are recommending, appears to be nearing realization. Such a step is certainly already being considered. The decree authorizing the suspension of the convertibility of the Swedish banknotes comes up for renewal on April 1, and it has transpired that the Government has been asked by the bank to extend it for a further period of six

weeks only. The shortness of this extension seems to point to the intention of resuming gold payments at an early date, which decision is probably taken on the strength of the knowledge that the bank will be able to retain the Russian gold shipments made to Sweden, but which up to now have gone via Stockholm to the United States and Switzerland. Moreover, it is reported that a small gold shipment to Stockholm has been made recently by a New York firm. It is probable that the return of the Swedish State bank to normal conditions will exercise a considerable influence on Switzerland, where, despite the reappearance of gold coins in the circulation, opinion is still hostile to larger measures, and where, consequently, the National Bank has not yet obtained release from the embargo on gold payments. For more than three months already the Swiss franc has commanded a slight premium on the dollar, and the metallic reserve of the bank of issue is so strong that the reduction in its rate of discount to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., viz., to the pre-war level, became possible last week.

Japan. The money market during the second half of February appeared a little easier, new issues continuing. Nevertheless, the general tone of the market was unmistakably steady, and although the movement of the end-of-the-month money was not on a large scale the rate of day-to-day money at the end of the month went up to 27 rin. p.d. Industries display no sign of activity throughout the country. The uncertain outlook has depressed the Stock Exchange where, at the last meeting of the month a rapid sensational fall occurred in the cotton spinning shares owing to heavy speculative selling. All other shares also experienced a considerable fall.

Dividends

BROMPTON AND KENSINGTON ELECTRICITY.—Final 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ p.c. on Ord., making 12 p.c. for 1921.
 CALEDONIAN TRUST.—Final 4 p.c. on Ord., making 8 p.c. for year to 31st Jan., 1922.
 CHELSEA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.—Final 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ p.c. on Ord., making 6 p.c. for 1921.
 COLISEUM SYNDICATE.—Final 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ p.c. on Ord., making 25 p.c. for 1921.
 EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ASSURANCE.—Final 2s. 6d. per share, tax free, making 4s. per share, tax free, for 1921.
 JOHN BARKER & CO.—20 p.c. on Ord. for year to 31st Jan., 1922.
 JOSEPH CROSFIELD & SONS.—5 p.c. on Ord. for year to 30th Nov., 1921.
 LIBERTY & CO.—20 p.c. on Ord., tax free, for year to 31st Jan., 1922.
 LINCOLN WAGON AND ENGINE.—Final 5 p.c., making 10 p.c. for year to 1st Feb., and bonus 1s. 6d. per share, tax free.
 METROPOLE HOTELS (IRELAND).—8 p.c. for 1921.
 METROPOLITAN ELECTRIC SUPPLY.—Final 5 p.c. on Ord., making 7 p.c. for 1921.
 NATIONAL BANK OF EGYPT.—Final 11 p.c., making 15 p.c. for 1921.
 NORTH BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE.—10 p.c. on Ord., tax free, for 1921.
 O. C. HAWKES.—Final 5 p.c. on Ord., making 8 p.c. for 1921.
 PLYMOUTH BREWERIES.—Final 5 p.c. on Ord., making 10 p.c. for year.
 WILLIAM GOSSAGE & SONS.—15 p.c. on Ord. for year to 30th Nov., 1921.
 W. HILL & SON.—7 $\frac{1}{2}$ p.c. on Ord. for 1921.

Publications Received

Production and Fair Profits. By James Turner. Sherratt & Hughes: 6s. net.
Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics, Sept. 1921. High Commissioner for Australia.
Australia: Its People, Its Resources, Its Progress. Address to the Bankers of London, delivered at Australia House on August 19, 1921, by the Rt. Hon. W. M. Hughes, High Commissioner for Australia.
Cull & Co.'s Financial Review, March. An interview with Gen. Ricardo Carrascosa upon the Mexican situation is the principal feature.
Monthly Review of Business and Trade Conditions in South America, Feb. London and River Plate Bank.
Review, London County Westminster and Parr's Bank, Feb.
Monthly Review, London Joint City and Midland Bank, Feb.
Monthly Review, Barclay's Bank, March.
Investment Suggestions. A Selection of High-Grade Investment Securities, March. Guaranty Trust Co. of New York.

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